

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9963

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 2493

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KU

SUBJ: LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC GATHERING ISSUES MANIFESTO

REF: KUWAIT 1992

SUMMARY: LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC GATHERING, FORMED BY NUMBER OF PROMINENT, EDUCATED KUWAITIS, ISSUED LENGTHY MANIFESTO. AIMS OF GROUPING STATED TO BE SAFEGUARDING ENTITY OF KUWAIT AND INDIVIDUALS' INTERESTS. MANIFESTO CALLS FOR INTERNAL REFORMS INCLUDING WOMEN'S VOTE, COMPULSORY EDUCATION, EQUAL RIGHTS IN SEVERAL FIELDS FOR NON-KUWAITIS. DOCUMENT SAYS GATHERING WILL MAKE ITS VIEWS KNOWN DIRECTLY TO PEOPLE IN PRESS, LECTURES, SEMINARS. GROUP APPEARS TO HAVE GOK SUPPORT, ALTHOUGH GOK SPOKESMAN HAS STATED PARTIES ARE PREMATURE AND GOK WILL NOT ALLOW GATHERINGS IF PURPOSE IS TO SET UP POLITICAL PARTIES. END SUMMARY.

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1. LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC GATHERING (LDG) - A GROUP OF PROMINENT,

EDUCATED KUWAITIS, RELEASED ITS MANIFESTO, RUNNING TO SOME 30 PAGES IN ARABIC, ON FRIDAY, JUNE 8. GENERAL TENOR OF MANIFESTO AS FOLLOWS:

2. FORMATION OF GROUPING CONSIDERED TO BE NECESSITY FOR KUWAIT AT THIS TIME WHEN CONTRADICTIONS HAVE INCREASED AND DEPUTIES LIMITING THEIR WORK TO THEIR OWN CAUSES IN PREPARATION FOR NEXT ELECTION, DISREGARDING MAJOR INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY. IT IS TIME FOR KUWAIT TO ENTER A NEW STAGE IN PREPARATION FOR LEGALIZATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES, AND GROUP MEMBERSHIP WOULD WORK FOR CONSOLIDATION OF FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY IN KUWAIT, EXPANSION OF EDUCATION, AND HIGHER STANDARDS IN NATIONAL PRESS.

3. MANIFESTO STATES "THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE TO DEMOCRACY BUT DEVASTATION AND ANARCHY", AND ASSERTS THAT GATHERING WILL TURN INTO PARTY AS AND WHEN THIS IS LEGALLY POSSIBLE.

4. MANIFESTO DEFINES AIMS OF GROUPING TO SAFEGUARD ENTITY OF KUWAIT AS A WHOLE WHILE ALSO SAFEGUARDING INDIVIDUALS' INTERESTS. DOCUMENT CALLS FOR INTERNAL REFORMS INCLUDING WOMEN'S VOTE AND COMPULSORY EDUCATION FOR ALL. IT ALSO DEMANDS EQUAL RIGHTS IN EMPLOYMENT, PROPERTY OWNERSHIP, AND OTHER FIELDS FOR NON-KUWAITIS WHO MAKE UP MAJORITY OF KUWAIT POPULATION. CONCERNING EXTERNAL POLICIES, MANIFESTO SAID INTER-ARAB RELATIONS SHOULD BE BASED ON FRATERNITY AND UNDERSTANDING, NON-INTERFERENCE AND MUTUAL RESPECT. ARAB UNITY IS GOAL. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN GENERAL SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED ON BASIS OF NATIONAL INTEREST.

5. MANIFESTO SAYS GROUP WILL CONTACT PEOPLE DIRECTLY, AVOID ABUSE OF PERSONS AND ESTABLISHMENTS, PRESENT ITS VIEWS IN PRESS AND LECTURES, AND WILL PARTICIPATE IN EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS.

6. COMMENT: NEW LDG, WHOSE BEGINNINGS WERE OUTLINED REFTTEL, APPEARS TO HAVE TAKEN ITS FIRST FORMAL STEP TOWARD GAINING PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE. GATHERING HAS PROMISED ISSUE ECONOMIC MANIFESTO SHORTLY.

7. GATHERING REPORTEDLY BACKED, IF NOT SPONSORED, BY CP/PM JABER AL-AHMAD. FORMATION OF GROUP APPEARS TO BE HEALTHY STEP WHICH SHOULD HELP BRING RESPONSIBLE DEPUTIES INTO NATIONAL CONFIDENTIAL

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ASSEMBLY. PRESS HAS POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT IF PARTIES ARE PERMITTED, THIS WILL LIKELY GIVE RISE TO OTHER, LESS WELCOME, PARTIES SUCH AS NASSERITES, BAATHISTS, AND OTHERS.

8. ALTHOUGH INTEREST IN POLITICAL PARTIES SEEMS TO BE INCREASING, MINISTER INTERIOR SHAIKH SAAD ON MAY 26 TOLD PRESS THAT PRESENCE OF POLITICAL PARTIES IN KUWAIT IS PREMATURE. ACCORDINGLY, HE SAID, GOVERNMENT WILL NOT ALLOW FORMATION OF ANY POLITICAL

PARTIES AT PRESENT TIME. WHEN ASKED IF THAT PRECLUDED SETTING UP "GATHERINGS", SHAIKH SAAD SAID "IF SUCH GROUPINGS ARE AIMED AT SETTING UP POLITICAL PARTIES IN KUWAIT, THEY ARE REJECTED". LDG MANIFESTO DESCRIBED ABOVE SPECIFICALLY STATES THAT GATHERING IS NOT AIMED AT SETTING UP POLITICAL PARTY, ALTHOUGH IT WILL BECOME PARTY WHEN THIS LEGALLY POSSIBLE.
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